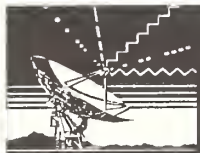


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Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2680

September 23, 1994

JAPAN'S APPLE MARKET -- Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced September 21 that final approval from Japan for the shipment of U.S. apples could come shortly. Espy said, "The market prospect for U.S. apples in Japan is very promising." Secretary Espy estimates that apple exports to Japan could reach \$10 to \$15 million in the first year, with growth projected to reach over \$75 million within five years. While this year's program applies only to qualified production from the state of Washington, Espy is optimistic that with the continued cooperation of Japanese authorities, the apple industry, and the USDA that other U.S. apple-producing areas can be approved to export in the future. **Contact: Don Washington (202) 720-3101.**

PUBLIC HEARING ON USE OF TERM "FRESH" -- USDA held a public hearing in Washington, D.C. on September 20 concerning the use of the term "fresh" on the labeling of raw poultry products. Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy has directed USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service to reexamine the current policy to ensure it "is reasonable and meets today's consumer expectations." Also, Espy has directed FSIS to "make sure that any policy change does not open the door to problems like the growth of bacteria that could cause foodborne illness." **Contact: Jacque Knight (202) 720-9113.**

COMMENTS ON 1995 RICE PROGRAM -- USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) is requesting comments on provisions of the 1995 rice program, according to Grant Buntrock, executive vice president of CCC. Comments are specifically requested regarding: whether an acreage reduction program should be implemented for the 1995 rice crop and, if so, the percentage reduction; the levels of premiums and discounts appropriate for different grades of rice; and an appropriate difference between price support rates for milled whole kernels of long grain and medium/short grain rice. Comments must be received by October 24 and may be faxed to (202) 690-1346. **Contact: Robert Feist (202) 720-6789.**

ALGERIA ELIGIBLE FOR MORE BUTTERFAT -- Secretary of Agriculture Mike Espy announced that Algeria is eligible for an additional 5,000 metric tons of butterfat under the USDA's Dairy Export Incentive Program. Sales of butterfat will be made to buyers within Algeria through commercial channels at competitive world prices. Sales will be facilitated through the payment of bonuses by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. **Contact: Marleen Stinson (202) 720-2061.**

COMMENTS ON WOOL AND MOHAIR SUPPORT PRICES -- USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) has asked for public comment on the support prices for pulled wool and mohair for the 1995 marketing year. As required by the National Wool Act of 1954, as amended, the two-year phaseout of the wool and mohair programs began with the 1994 marketing year. Producer payments for the 1995 marketing year will be calculated using the support prices covered by this proposed rule, but will then be reduced by 50 percent in accordance with the Wool Act. The Wool Act is in effect through December 31, 1995. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

ESPY AND DASCHLE UNVEIL LEGISLATION FOR MEAT AND POULTRY -- Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy and U.S. Senator Tom Daschle unveiled legislation last week that would significantly reform and improve the meat and poultry inspection systems by mandating microbial testing and setting levels of pathogens that constitute a threat to public health. Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy said, "This legislation would build into our nation's food safety laws the commitment we are making at the Department of Agriculture to target microbial pathogens in meat and poultry products and to take serious steps to reduce the risk of foodborne illness." Espy and Daschle unveiled the legislation during a September 14 news conference on Capitol Hill. **Contact: Patrick Collins (202) 720-7943.**

MIAMI FRUIT GROWER CHARGED WITH BRIBERY -- A Miami, Florida federal grand jury has returned a three count indictment charging a Miami fruit grower with bribery of public officials. USDA's Acting Inspector General Charles Gillum said the September 9 indictment charged Franz A. Arango, 59, with offering bribes to USDA employees in exchange for disaster relief payments through USDA's Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service. According to the indictment, Arango approached a USDA official and offered a kickback if the official would help Arango receive an ASCS disaster payment. The indictment further charges that Arango offered two bribes, totaling \$2,200, to an undercover agent with USDA's office of the Inspector General. If convicted, Arango could be fined and sentenced to a term of up to 15 years in prison. **Contact: Brian L. Haaser (202) 720-6701.**

NEW DIETARY GUIDELINES ADVISORY COMMITTEE -- A new Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, appointed by the Secretaries of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, met for a two-day session September 22-23 in Washington, D.C. The 11-member committee was appointed to comply with public law which requires that secretaries of the two departments publish the dietary guidelines every five years. If the committee decides revisions are warranted, based on current scientific evidence, their recommendations will be incorporated into the 1995 edition of the guidelines. **Contact: Johna Pierce (202) 720-1691.**

USDA RESTRICTS IMPORTATION OF PORTUGAL ANIMAL PRODUCTS -- On September 20, USDA announced restrictions on importation of ruminant meats and animal products and byproducts from Portugal because bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE, also known as mad cow disease) has been detected in native cattle in that country. This action is being taken to reduce the risk of introducing this disease into the U.S. Mad cow disease is a fatal neurologic disease of cattle that was first diagnosed in Great Britain in 1986. Currently, USDA regulations also restrict importation of ruminant products from France, Great Britain, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, Oman and Switzerland because of this disease. USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service enforces import restrictions and is conducting surveillance for mad cow disease to ensure that this serious disease does not become established in the United States, where it has never been detected. **Contact: Kendra Pratt (301) 436-4898.**

FAX -- You can obtain our radio and TV programming information and the **Broadcasters Letter** through your facsimile machine by calling USDA's AgNewsFax. Use the telephone connected to your FAX machine to call **(202) 690-3944**. At voice prompts press **1**, press **4**, then to receive **Broadcasters Letter**, press **9200**; radio newslines information, press **9250**; TV contents billboard, press **9260**; TV scripts, press **9270**. After all your selections, then press **#**, press **3**, and press the **start** button on your FAX machine.

FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA # 1947 -- In this edition, Patrick O'Leary takes a look at a government sponsored program that is helping small towns solve rural development problems. Grassroots efforts are making a difference in solving problems and renewing spirit in this rural revitalization effort. (Weekly cassette -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

CONSUMER TIME # 1428 -- School lunch update; smokejumping patriots and pioneers; tick disease research tool; cutting down on fat and sodium in the diet; bigger and better plants. (Weekly cassette -- 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

AGRITAPE FEATURES #1938 -- China buys U.S. corn; budget and the farm bill; raising ticks the new-fashioned way; back-up bees; 1995 rice program comments. (Weekly cassette -- news features.)

UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE. These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newslines carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Thursday, September 29 -- grain stocks report; hogs and pigs report; Friday September 30 -- agricultural prices report; trout production report; Tuesday, October 4 -- weekly weather and crop report; Wednesday, October 5 -- dairy products report.

USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.

COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill has several reports this week: The Beagle Brigade is located in international airports in the U.S. as part of USDA's program to protect American agriculture from costly pests and diseases; USDA researchers are working on an environmentally-friendly process to make paper; USDA fungi collection that could hold some answers to forest management; tips on how to use a slow cooker with food safety in mind.

ACTUALITIES -- USDA chief meteorologist Norton Strommen on the latest weather and crop developments.

UPCOMING FEATURES -- Lynn Wyvill reports on a USDA Forest Service program to make National Forests accessible to everyone.

SATELLITE COORDINATES FOR TV NEWSFEEDS:

*Galaxy 7, Transponder 9, Channel 9, Audio 6.2 or 6.8, Downlink frequency 3880 Mhz.
Available on Thursdays 3:45 - 4:00 p.m., EDT; Mondays 11:00 - 11:15 a.m., EDT.*

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services.
Call Larry A. Quinn, (202) 720-6072; write 1618-S, USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300.

OFF MIKE

FLYING BROADCASTER...who is in touch with the West is **Evan Slack** (Evan Slack Network, Denver, CO). Evan says a big concern among his listeners is fed cattle market prices. He flies his own plane in traveling to cattlemen's conventions, video cattle auctions and other events while covering cattle, wheat and edible beans stories for 55 radio stations in nine states. Evan's listeners range from Calgary, Canada, to Canadian, TX. He reports hearing long-time farm broadcaster **Bill McReynolds** (WOAI, San Antonio, TX) on-the-air during a recent trip to south Texas.

OLDEST COUNTY FAIR IN TEXAS...was a recent feature story reported by **Jerry Lackey** (KLST-TV, San Angelo, TX). Jerry says the fair in Fredericksburg (Gillespie County) has been held continuously for 106 years. He hosts a weekly, 30-minute Saturday morning TV program about Texas agriculture, now in its fourth year. Prior to that, Jerry was a radio broadcaster for 20 years as well as a magazine writer and editor.

TV WATER STORY...is being featured at the Virginia State Fair this week. Our **Patrick O'Leary** recently produced a video story on a new water system in the small rural community of Falls Mills, VA, for use in our weekly TV package delivered via satellite. We understand this feature is being shown at one of the fair's exhibits.

ON OUR DOORSTEP...this week I passed **Judy Stratman** (WNAX, Yankton, SD) as I was rushing out of USDA to catch a commuter train. Judy was accompanying South Dakota Farmers Union members on their annual "fly-in" to Washington to visit USDA and other Washington offices, including the White House. Judy interviewed **Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Richard Rominger** while at USDA and relayed the report back to her colleague, **Gene Williams**.



LARRY A. QUINN, Director
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